

First Class Travel Fiscal Year 2010

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**Prepared by the Office of Governmentwide Policy
Office of Travel, Transportation and Asset Management
General Services Administration**

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Introduction

Travel is a necessary component of an agency accomplishing its mission. In an atmosphere of increased transparency and budget reductions, accountability of agencies' travel expenditures are closely evaluated to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely. First class transportation is one aspect of travel that receives such scrutiny. Use of first class transportation must be the exception rather than the rule during the standard course of Government business.

Government travelers are required and expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business¹. Therefore, when making official travel arrangements, agencies and employees must consider the least expensive class of transportation that meets their needs. Government travelers may use the lowest other than coach-class airline accommodations only when their agency specifically authorizes/approves such transportation accommodations.

To achieve the goals of greater accountability and transparency for this category of travel, the Federal Travel Regulation² (FTR) requires Federal agencies to annually submit data to the General Services Administration (GSA) regarding the usage of first class transportation accommodations by their travelers.

The FY 2010 First Class Travel Report contains information from 43 Federal agencies, departments and other Federal entities. Twenty-one organizations reported funding 1,575 first class segments. Twenty-two organizations submitted a "negative" response.

The civilian agencies reporting first class transportation for FY 2010 spent approximately \$701 million³ for air transportation for all accommodations, while first class accommodations represent less than 3 percent of the total.

¹ Federal Travel Regulation; § 301-2.3 What standard of care must I use in incurring travel expenses?

² Federal Travel Regulation; Subpart B Requirement to Report Use of Other Than Coach-Class Transportation Accommodations.

³ Data source: General Services Administration's Travel Management Information System

Methodology

Federal agencies are required to annually collect and report their use of first class travel accommodations to GSA's, Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP).

Agencies are required to report only those legs or segments of trips that are first class travel paid for by the government. Therefore travel data contained in this report does not represent the full cost of any particular trip. This data only captures that part or segment of the trip that was taken as first class accommodations.

There are circumstances where agencies first class travel is not reportable. Agencies do not report first class travel where:

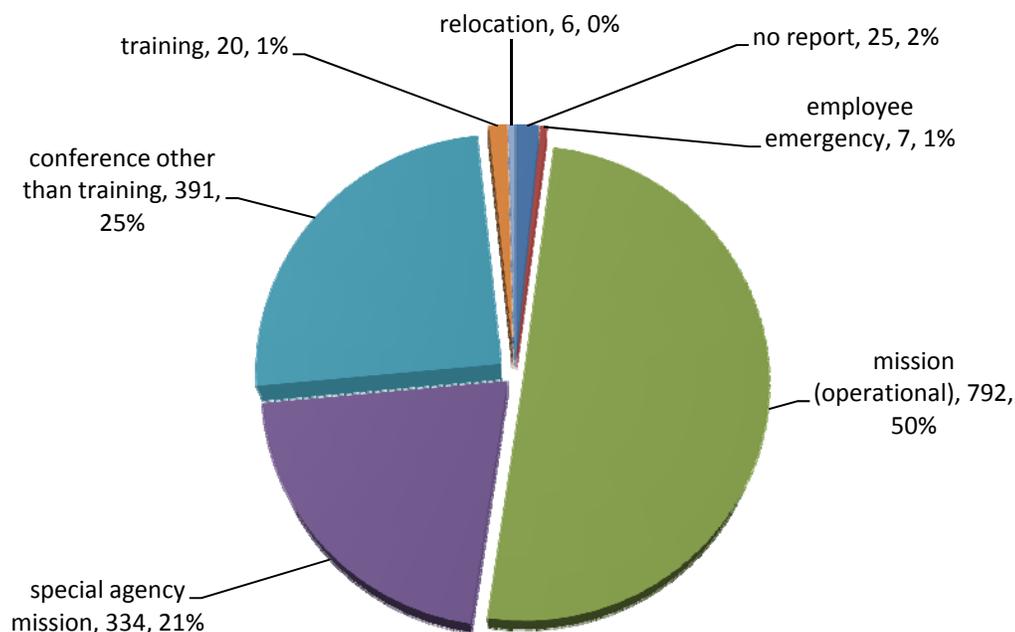
- First class is paid for by the traveler;
- First class is acquired through frequent flier points or benefits;
- First class is considered a free upgrade; or
- The agency paid coach-class fare for first class seating.

Agencies with no FY 2010 first class travel to report, must submit a negative report.

Travel Purpose Identifier

Of the 1,575 reported first class segments, 1,517 segments (96%) accounted for were classified under three travel purpose identifiers, and are depicted in the following pie chart.

First Class Segments by Travel Purpose



Mission (operational) is used when employees travel to a particular site in order to perform operational or managerial activities. Travel to attend a meeting to discuss general agency operations, to review status reports, or discuss topics of general agency interest. Examples: Employee's day-to-day operational or managerial activities, as defined by the agency, to include, but not be limited to: hearings, site visit, information meeting, inspections, audits, investigations, and examinations.

Conference Other Than Training is used when travel is in consultation, or an exchange of information. Examples: participating in a planned program as a speaker/panelist or other form of presentation, host, planner, or others designated to oversee the conference or attendance with no formal role, or as an exhibitor.

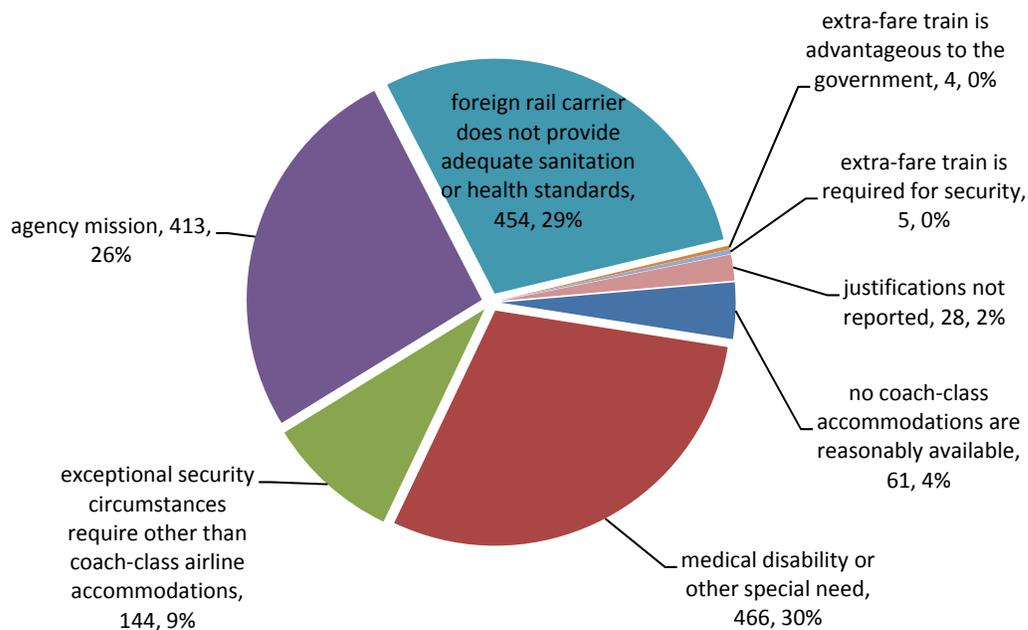
Special Agency Mission is used when travelers are required to perform a task that is unique or distinctive and is outside the agency's normal course of day-to-day business. Special missions are defined by the head of each agency and normally not programmed in the agency's annual funding authorization. Examples of special agency mission include details, security missions, and agency emergency response/recovery such as civil, natural disasters, evacuation, catastrophic events, technical assistance, evaluations or assessments.

First Class Justification

Federal employees on official travel are required to use the contract city-pair fare for scheduled air passenger transportation accommodations, and equivalent lowest coach-class fares for train and ship accommodations. However, circumstances exist that permit agencies to fund first class travel if the reason complies with the criteria specified in FTR §301-10.123, for air, §301-10.162 for train, and §301-10.183 for ship. Additionally, all first class authorization must be in accordance with agency travel policy and procedures. Of the 1,575 reported first class segments, 1333 segments (85%) were classified under three first class justifications.

Medical Disability or Special Need was the highest utilized justification accounting for 466 (30%) of the segments. Use of *medical disability or special need* requires a certified, written statement from a competent medical authority to be on file with the

First Class Justificaiton



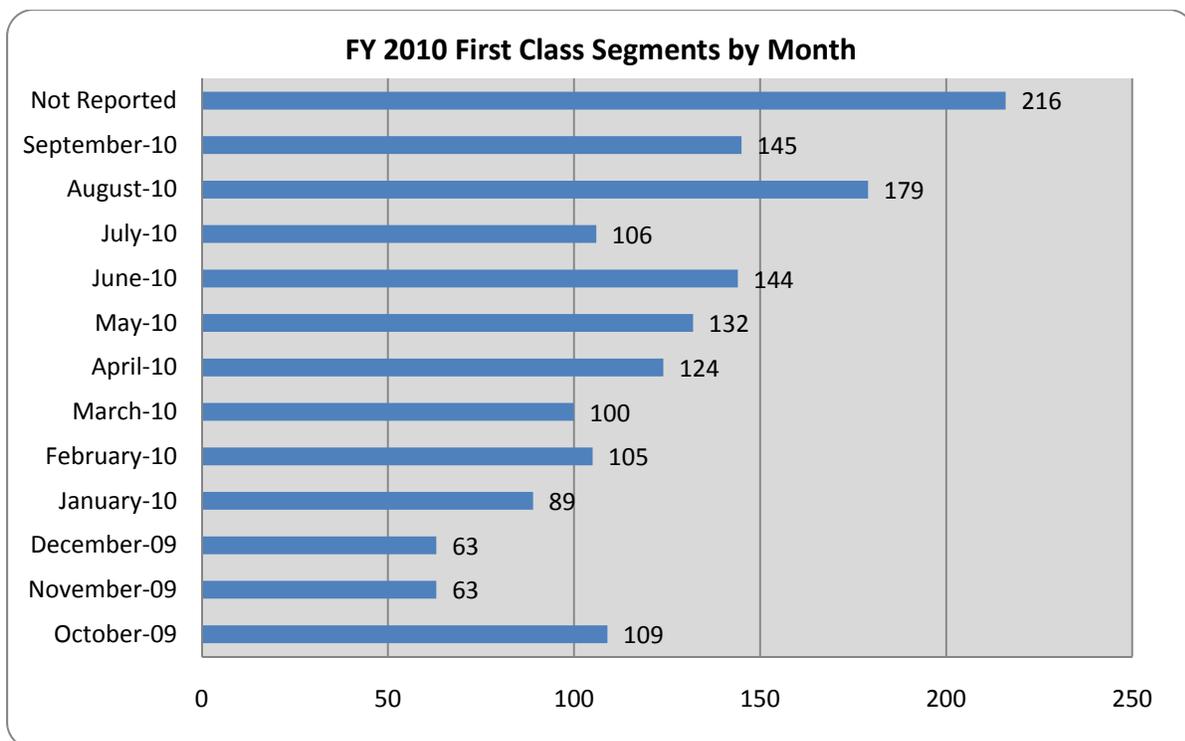
agency. Of the 466 segments, the Department of Health and Human Services accounted for 296 segments (63%) of all *medical disability or special need* first class segments.

The second most utilized justification for FY 2010 was *Approved Foreign Rail Carrier does not Provide Adequate Sanitation or Health Standard* accounting for 454 segments (29%). Inadequate health standard is a criterion under exceptional security circumstances that require other than coach-class rail accommodations and must be determined by each agency as part of their internal travel policies. The Department of State accounted for 454 segments (100%), with 451 segments (99%) occurring in Korea.

The third most utilized justification, *agency mission*, accounted for 413 (26%) of first class segment. *Agency mission* is unique and specific to each agency. All agencies must develop and issue internal guidance on what specific mission criteria justifies approval of first class accommodations.

First Class Segments by Month

No discernable pattern in monthly travel exists aside from a consistent increase beginning October 2009 until August of 2010. The category of monthly travel Not Reported accounted for 216 segments (13%). The Department of Homeland Security accounted for 100 percent of the reported segments in Not Reported. Their concern was the data could provide agency mission activity patterns; thus, opening their travels to undue risk.



Conclusion

Managing first class accommodations is a critical component to the overall management of any agencies' travel program. When the need arises for first class travel, it must be justified according to the Federal Travel Regulation, agency policy and procedures then verified by agency travel oversight.

During FY 2010, 43 agencies responded to GSA's data call. Twenty-one agencies submitted travel data detailing justifications for 1575 first class segments. Twenty-two Federal agencies and programs submitted negative responses, indicating they had no first class travel to report.

The 21 agencies submitting first class travel indicated that 50% of their first-class travel was to accomplish agency missions; 25% of the time to participate in conferences other than training, and 21% to accomplish special missions. Thirty percent of the time agencies justified their first class travel as medical disability or special need. Foreign rail not providing adequate health standards accounted for 29% of the first class justifications. While performing agency missions was the third justification accounting for 26 percent of the first class travel.

If the percentage of funds spent for acquiring first class transportation indicates an opportunity for improving the management traveling first class; then, agencies have made managing first class a priority. As the combined agencies' spend for first class travel is less than 3 percent of the total air transportation component of their travel budgets.

Beginning in FY 2011, the First Class Travel Report will be renamed *Other Than Coach-Class Travel Report* and will include business and first class transportation accommodations. This change incorporates the General Accountability Office's recommendations contained in their report: *Internal Control Weaknesses Governmentwide Led to Improper and Abusive Use of Premium Class Travel* (GAO 07-1268).

Appendix: A
Travel Agency Negative Submissions

FY 2010 Negative Submissions

1. Broadcasting Board of Governors
2. Consumer Product Safety Commission
3. Corporation for National and Community Service
4. Department of Interior
5. Farm Credit Administration
6. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
7. Federal Housing Finance Agency
8. Federal Maritime Commission
9. General Accountability Office
10. Inter-American Foundation
11. Merit Systems Protection Board
12. Millennium Challenge Corporation
13. National Archives and Records Administration
14. Nuclear Security Administration
15. Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission
16. Office of Personnel Management
17. Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
18. Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
19. Railroad Retirement Board
20. RITA Maritime Administration
21. US Agency for International Development
22. US Arctic Research Commission

**Appendix B:
Agency Distribution by all Transportation Modes**

FY 2010 Agency First Class Segments by Transportation Mode

	Not Reported	Air	Train	Ship	Total
<i>Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	9	9
<i>Department of Commerce</i>	-	87	-	-	87
<i>Department of Defense</i>	-	37	-	-	37
<i>Department of Education</i>	-	2	-	-	2
<i>Department of Energy</i>	-	34	-	-	34
<i>Department of Homeland Security</i>	1	228	-	-	229
<i>Department of Health and Human Services</i>	-	347	-	-	347
<i>Department of Justice</i>	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Department of State</i>	1	128	599	-	728
<i>Department of Transportation</i>	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	-	14	-	-	14
<i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	-	16	-	-	16
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	-	3	-	-	3
<i>Library of Congress</i>	-	-	1	-	1
<i>General Services Administration</i>	3	5	-	-	8
<i>National Science Foundation</i>	23	-	-	-	23
<i>National Transportation Safety Board</i>	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</i>	-	8	-	-	8
<i>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</i>	-	14	-	-	14
<i>Smithsonian</i>	-	11	-	-	11
<i>US Trade</i>	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Grand Total</i>	28	938	600	9	1575

Appendix C: Distribution by Air First Class Justification

FY 2010 First Class Air Justifications

	Not Specified	No Coach-Class Accommodations are Reasonably Available	Medical Disability or Other Special Need	Exceptional Security Circumstances	Agency Mission	Totals
<i>Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Commerce</i>	-	21	52	-	14	87
<i>Department of Defense</i>	-	4	30	1	2	37
<i>Department of Education</i>	-	1	1	-	-	2
<i>Department of Energy</i>	-	2	7	25	-	34
<i>Department of Homeland Security</i>	1	2	12	1	213	228
<i>Department of Health and Human Services</i>	-	18	296	-	33	347
<i>Department of Justice</i>	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>Department of State</i>	1	-	-	7	121	128
<i>Department of Transportation</i>	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	-	-	14	-	-	14
<i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	-	3	13	-	-	16
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	-	-	2	-	1	3
<i>Library of Congress</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>General Services Administration</i>	3	4	1	-	-	5
<i>National Science Foundation</i>	23	-	-	-	-	0
<i>National Transportation Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	-	1	1
<i>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</i>	-	-	8	-	-	8
<i>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</i>	-	-	14	-	-	14
<i>Smithsonian</i>	-	1	7	-	3	11
<i>US Trade</i>	-	1	-	-	-	1
Grand/Total	28	59	457	34	388	938

Appendix D: Distribution by Rail First Class Justification

FY 2010 First Class Rail Justifications

	No Coach-Class Accommodations are Reasonably Available	Medical Disability or Other Special Need	Exceptional Security Circumstances	Foreign Rail Carrier No Adequate Sanitation or Health Standards / Provided	Agency Mission	Xtra-Fare Train is Advantageous to the Government	Xtra-Fare Travel is Required for Security Reasons	Totals
<i>Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Commerce</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Defense</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Education</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Energy</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Homeland Security</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Health and Human Services</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Justice</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of State</i>	1	-	110	454	25	4	5	599
<i>Department of Transportation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Library of Congress</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<i>General Services Administration</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>National Science Foundation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>National Transportation Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Smithsonian</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>US Trade</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Grand/Total</i>	2	0	110	454	25	4	5	600

Appendix E: Distribution by Ship First Class Justification

<i>FY 2010 First Class Ship Justifications</i>					
	Lowest First Class Travel accommodations not Available on the Ship	Medical Disability or Other Special Need	Exceptional Security Circumstances	Agency Mission	Totals
<i>Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board</i>	-	9	-	-	9
<i>Department of Commerce</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Defense</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Education</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Energy</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Homeland Security</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Health and Human Services</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Justice</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of State</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Transportation</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Library of Congress</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>General Services Administration</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>National Science Foundation</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>National Transportation Safety Board</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Smithsonian</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>US Trade</i>	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Grand Total</i>	-	9	-	-	9

Appendix F: Distribution by Transportation / Travel Purpose

Fy 2010 First Class Transportation by Travel Purpose Identifiers

	Not Specified	Employee Emergency	Mission (Operational)	Special Agency Mission	Conference--Other Than Training	Training	Relocation	Total Segments
<i>Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board</i>	-	-	8	-	-	1	-	9
<i>Department of Commerce</i>	-	2	59	3	19	4	-	87
<i>Department of Defense</i>	-	-	37	-	-	-	-	37
<i>Department of Education</i>	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
<i>Department of Energy</i>	-	-	24	6	3	1	-	34
<i>Department of Homeland Security</i>	-	4	8	215	2	-	-	229
<i>Department of Health and Human Services</i>	-	-	232	43	56	10	6	347
<i>Department of Justice</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Department of State</i>	1	-	357	67	301	2	-	728
<i>Department of Transportation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	-	-	12	-	2	-	-	14
<i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	16
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	3
<i>Library of Congress</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>General Services Administration</i>	1	-	1	-	5	1	-	8
<i>National Science Foundation</i>	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
<i>National Transportation Safety Board</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</i>	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	8
<i>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</i>	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	14
<i>Smithsonian</i>	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	11
<i>US Trade</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Grand Total</i>	25	7	792	334	391	20	6	1575